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TM

GHOST RIDER

TM

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FREAKS!

SCOTTIE in A Cracker Jack story
OKAY, SCOTTIE! THE SCORE IS TIED, BASES LOADED, AND TWO OUTS! GET IN THERE AND SHOW 'EM WHAT YOU'RE MADE OF.
COACH
I'LL DO MY BEST, COACH.
STRIKE ONE!
¡GULP! WHAT IF I STRIKE OUT?!?!
STRIKE TWO!
YOU CAN DO IT, SCOTTIE!
YOU'RE A CRACKER JACK.
ZOOM!
WHAP!
WHEN YOU'RE REALLY GOOD-THEY CALL YOU CRACKER JACK
CRACK
HOME RUN
YOU DID IT, SCOTTIE.
WE WON THE PLAYOFFS!
WHAT A CRACKER JACK!
Cracker Jack
CANDIED POPCORN AND PEANUTS
Toy Surprise INSIDE
BORDEN
NET WT. 1¼ OZ.
Crunchy caramel-coated popcorn and peanuts and a secret toy surprise!

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Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE GHOST RIDER IN...
FREAKS!
by ROGER STERN, BOB SHIDANSKY, DAVE SIMONS, DIANA ALBERS, BOB SHAREN, TOM DeFALCO, & JIM SHOOTER
MOTHER NATURE HAS A NASTY SENSE OF HUMOR!
POETS LAUD HER GREAT WORKS--WAXING PURPLE OVER HER MAJESTIC FORESTS AND TEEMING RIVERS--BUT THEY FORGET HER TRANSGRESSIONS...
EVERY SO OFTEN, MOTHER NATURE TWISTS HER GENETIC CODES EVER SO SLIGHTLY, AND THEN, SOMEONE OR SOME THING--IS BORN MISSHAPEN... FREAKISH...
...SOMEONE LIKE JEREMY!

GHOST RIDER® Vol. 1, No. 78, July, 1982. (U.S.P.S. 405-860) Published by MARVEL COMICS GROUP, James E. Galton, President, Stan Lee, Publisher, Michael Hobson, Vice-President, Publishing, Milton Schiffman, Vice-President, Production. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 575 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022. SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT NEW YORK, N.Y. AND AT ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES. Published monthly. Copyright© 1982 by Marvel Comics Group, a division of Cadence Industries Corporation. All rights reserved. Price 60¢ per copy in the U.S. and Canada. Subscription rate $7.20 for 12 issues. Canada, $8.20. Foreign, $9.20. Printed in the U.S.A. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the conditions that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition. GHOST RIDER (including all prominent characters featured in the issue), and the distinctive likenesses thereof, are trademarks of the MARVEL COMICS GROUP. Postmaster: Send address changes to Subscription Dept., Marvel Comics Group, 575 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022.

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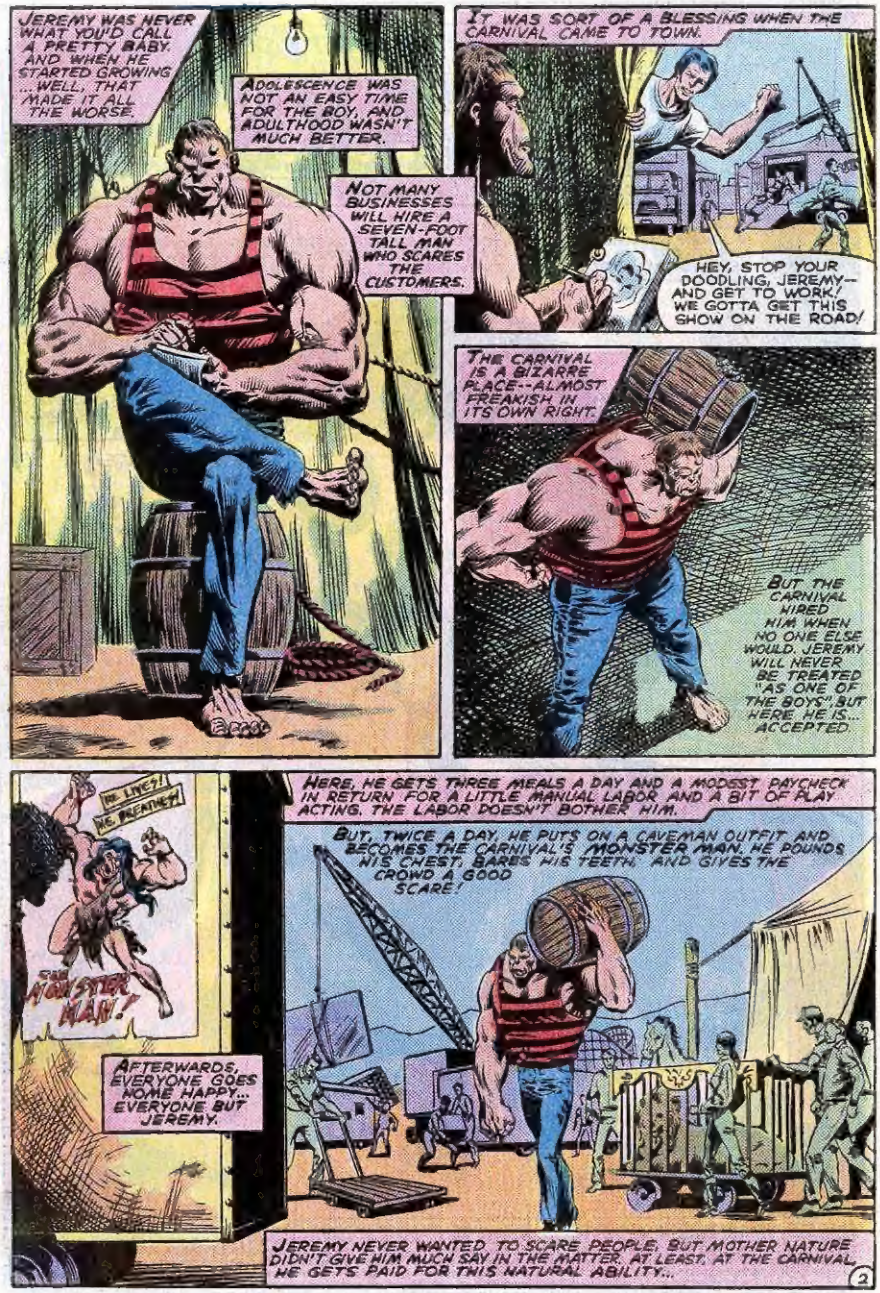
JEREMY WAS NEVER WHAT YOU'D CALL A PRETTY BABY. AND WHEN HE STARTED GROWING ...WELL, THAT MADE IT ALL THE WORSE.
ADOLESCENCE WAS NOT AN EASY TIME FOR THE BOY, AND ADULTHOOD WASN'T MUCH BETTER.
NOT MANY BUSINESSES WILL HIRE A SEVEN-FOOT TALL MAN WHO SCARES THE CUSTOMERS.
IT WAS SORT OF A BLESSING WHEN THE CARNIVAL CAME TO TOWN.
HEY, STOP YOUR DOODLING, JEREMY-- AND GET TO WORK! WE GOTTA GET THIS SHOW ON THE ROAD!
THE CARNIVAL IS A BIZARRE PLACE--ALMOST FREAKISH IN ITS OWN RIGHT.
BUT THE CARNIVAL HIRED HIM WHEN NO ONE ELSE WOULD. JEREMY WILL NEVER BE TREATED "AS ONE OF THE BOYS", BUT HERE HE IS... ACCEPTED.
HE LIVES?! HE BREATHES?!
THE MONSTER MAN!
AFTERWARDS, EVERYONE GOES HOME HAPPY... EVERYONE BUT JEREMY.
HERE, HE GETS THREE MEALS A DAY AND A MODEST PAYCHECK IN RETURN FOR A LITTLE MANUAL LABOR AND A BIT OF PLAY ACTING. THE LABOR DOESN'T BOTHER HIM.
BUT, TWICE A DAY, HE PUTS ON A CAVEMAN OUTFIT AND BECOMES THE CARNIVAL'S MONSTER MAN. HE POUNDS HIS CHEST, BARES HIS TEETH, AND GIVES THE CROWD A GOOD SCARE!
JEREMY NEVER WANTED TO SCARE PEOPLE, BUT MOTHER NATURE DIDN'T GIVE HIM MUCH SAY IN THE MATTER. AT LEAST, AT THE CARNIVAL, HE GETS PAID FOR THIS NATURAL ABILITY...
2

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HEY!
WHY DON'T YOU LOOK WHERE YOU'RE GOING, YOU BIG, DUMB...
...JERK
OMIGOD.
DON' WORRY MISTER. AH'M NOT GONNA HURT YA.
JUS' LEMME SET THIS DOWN.
AH... AH... AH...
HOLD IT RIGHT THERE!
WHA—?!
YOU WERE ABOUT TO FALL CLEAN OVER, SON!
I'M RALPH QUENTIN, THE OWNER OF THIS HERE CARNIVAL! IS THERE SOMETHING I CAN DO FOR YOU?
I-I WAS JUST LOOKING FOR SOMEONE I KNOW, SIR. BUT I FOUND MORE THAN I BARGAINED FOR!
OH, YOU MEAN JEREMY? SHOOT, DON'T LET HIS LOOKS FOOL YOU... JEREMY'S THE NICEST SOUL YOU'D EVER WANT TO MEET!
DIDN'T CATCH YOUR NAME, SON!
IT'S ELIOT, SIR... ELIOT FRANK—!
VRRROWW
NOW, WHAT IN TARNATION—?!
3

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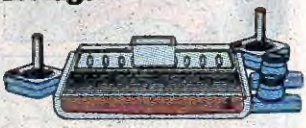

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TSR The Game Wizards

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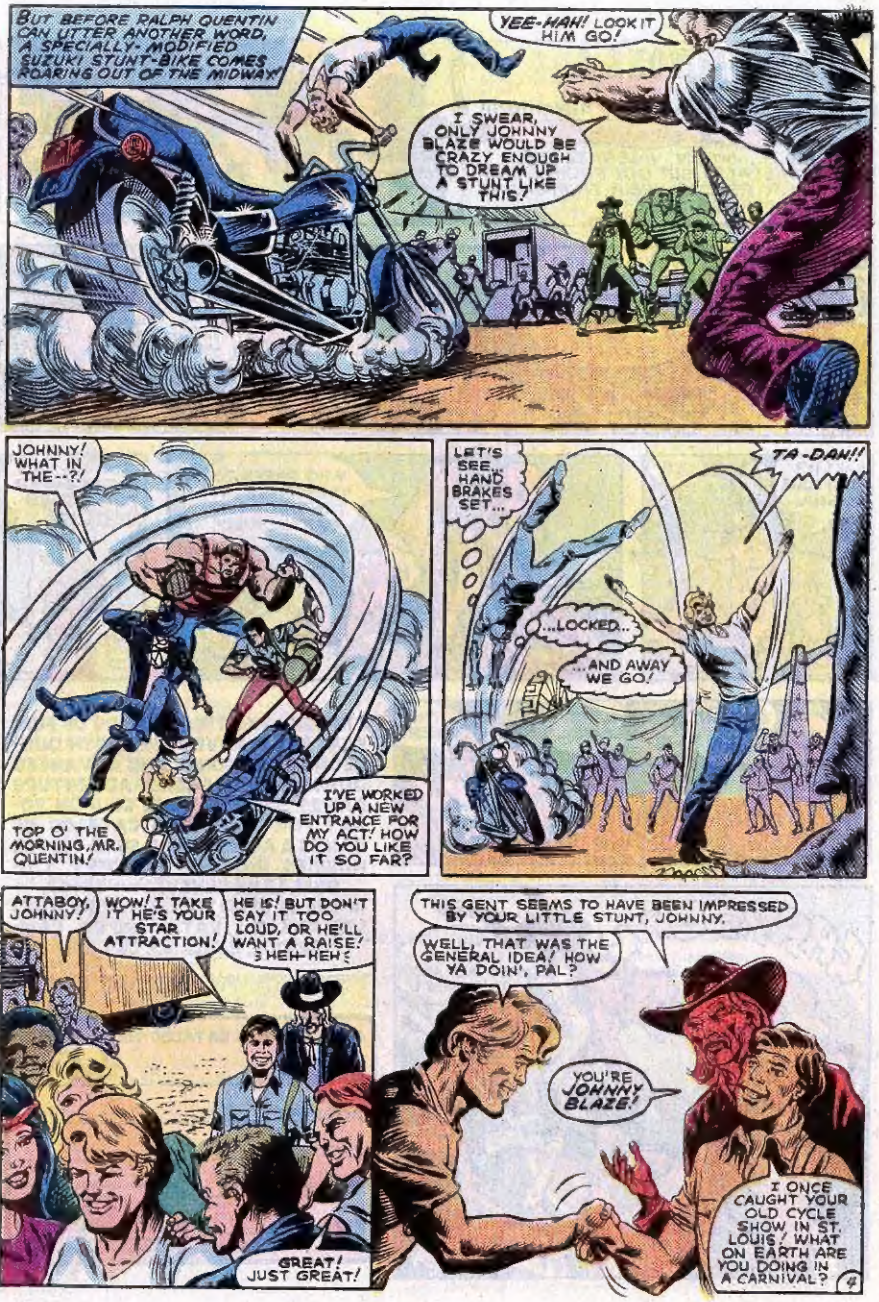
BUT BEFORE RALPH QUENTIN CAN UTTER ANOTHER WORD, A SPECIALLY-MODIFIED SUZUKI STUNT-BIKE COMES ROARING OUT OF THE MIDWAY!
YEE-HAH! LOOK IT HIM GO!
I SWEAR, ONLY JOHNNY BLAZE WOULD BE CRAZY ENOUGH TO DREAM UP A STUNT LIKE THIS!
JOHNNY! WHAT IN THE--?!
TOP O' THE MORNING, MR. QUENTIN!
I'VE WORKED UP A NEW ENTRANCE FOR MY ACT! HOW DO YOU LIKE IT SO FAR?
LET'S SEE... HAND BRAKES SET...
...LOCKED...
...AND AWAY WE GO!
TA-DAH!!
ATTABOY, JOHNNY!
WOW! I TAKE IT HE'S YOUR STAR ATTRACTION!
HE IS! BUT DON'T SAY IT TOO LOUD, OR HE'LL WANT A RAISE! HEH-HEH!
GREAT! JUST GREAT!
THIS GENT SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN IMPRESSED BY YOUR LITTLE STUNT, JOHNNY.
WELL, THAT WAS THE GENERAL IDEA! HOW YA DOIN', PAL?
YOU'RE JOHNNY BLAZE!
I ONCE CAUGHT YOUR OLD CYCLE SHOW IN ST. LOUIS! WHAT ON EARTH ARE YOU DOING IN A CARNIVAL?
4

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HEY, DON'T MAKE IT SOUND LIKE A DEATH SENTENCE... THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH WORKING THE CARNY CIRCUIT!
I LIKE TO THINK OF IT AS A WORKING VACATION... NOT THAT IT'S ANY OF YOUR BUSINESS, MISTER... MISTER--?
FRANKLIN... ELIOT FRANKLIN! AND NO OFFENSE MEANT, JOHNNY. HECK, MY FATHER WORKS HERE! MAYBE YOU KNOW HIM...
OH, THEN YOU'RE THE KID THAT CORK'S ALWAYS BRAGGING ABOUT!
E-ELIOT? SON?
POP! DOGGONIT, YOU'RE LOOKING GREAT!
SAY, WHY SO SURPRISED? DIDN'T YOU GET THE TELEGRAM I SENT, SAYING I WAS COMING?
UH... SURE, SON. I JUST WASN'T CERTAIN YOU'D MAKE IT BEFORE WE MOVED ON.
IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU, REAL GOOD.
IN ALL THE HUBBUB, JEREMY IS PRACTICALLY FORGOTTEN... NOT THAT HE MINDS SO MUCH. SOMETIMES, IT'S BETTER TO BE FORGOTTEN... THAN TO BE FEARED.
I WOULDA THOUGHT CORKY'D BE A LOT HAPPIER TO SEE HIS SON... HE WAS ALWAYS SO PROUD... SAID HIS BOY WAS SUCH A BIG-TIME CIRCUS STAR.
WONDER WHAT A BIG-TIME STAR IS DOIN', COMIN' HERE?
'COURSE JOHNNY'S BIG TIME, AN' HE WORKS HERE!
FUNNY... JOHNNY'S SO NICE TO ME... NICE TO EVER'BODY, BUT SOMETIMES... I DUNNO...
...IT'S LIKE HE'S HIDIN' SOMETHIN' DEEP INSIDE HIM... SOMETHIN' HE'S ASHAMED OF.
IS ELIOT HIDIN' SOMETHIN', TOO? SHUCKS, I GUESS HE JUST COULDA COME TO SEE HIS OL' MAN. FUNNY THOUGH...
OH!
CYNTHIA!
IN THE SHORT TIME CYNTHIA RANDOLPH HAS TRAVELED WITH THE CARNIVAL, JEREMY HAS NEVER MISSED A CHANCE TO WATCH HER--
5

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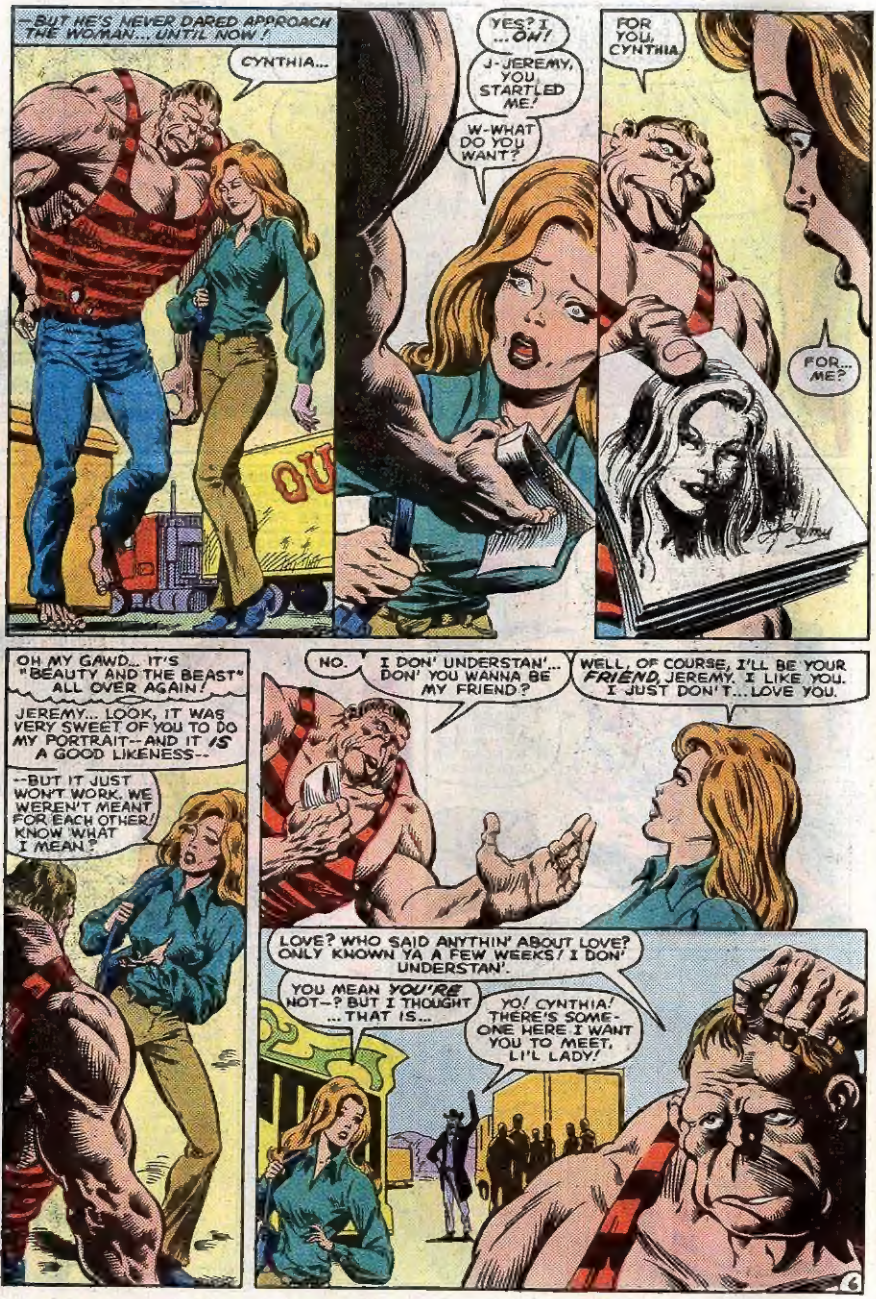
--BUT HE'S NEVER DARED APPROACH THE WOMAN... UNTIL NOW!
CYNTHIA...
YES? I ...OH!
J-JEREMY, YOU STARTLED ME!
W-WHAT DO YOU WANT?
FOR YOU, CYNTHIA
FOR... ME?
OH MY GAWD... IT'S "BEAUTY AND THE BEAST" ALL OVER AGAIN!
JEREMY... LOOK, IT WAS VERY SWEET OF YOU TO DO MY PORTRAIT--AND IT IS A GOOD LIKENESS--
--BUT IT JUST WON'T WORK. WE WEREN'T MEANT FOR EACH OTHER! KNOW WHAT I MEAN?
NO.
I DON' UNDERSTAN'... DON' YOU WANNA BE MY FRIEND?
WELL, OF COURSE, I'LL BE YOUR FRIEND, JEREMY. I LIKE YOU. I JUST DON'T... LOVE YOU.
LOVE? WHO SAID ANYTHIN' ABOUT LOVE? ONLY KNOWN YA A FEW WEEKS/ I DON' UNDERSTAN'.
YOU MEAN YOU'RE NOT--? BUT I THOUGHT ...THAT IS...
YO! CYNTHIA! THERE'S SOMEONE HERE I WANT YOU TO MEET, LI'L LADY!
6

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CYNTHIA RANDOLPH... THIS HAPPY GENT IS ELIOT FRANKLIN--CORKY'S PRIDE AN' JOY!
OH, YOU'RE THE FAMOUS CIRCUS CLOWN THAT CORKY'S ALWAYS TALKING ABOUT!
HEH HEH... I DON'T KNOW IF I'M ALL THAT FAMOUS, BUT I SERTAINLY AM PLEASED TO MEET YOU, CYNTHIA!
YOU BEEN WITH THE SHOW LONG?
ACTUALLY, I'M NOT "WITH" THE SHOW PER SE. I'M RESEARCHING A SERIES OF ARTICLES FOR WOMAN MAGAZINE.
I'M SURE THAT A MAN OF YOUR BACKGROUND WOULD HAVE SOME FASCINATING INSIGHTS!
UH SORRY NOT INTERESTED I JUST WANT TO SPEND SOME TIME WITH MY FATHER
C'MON, DAD! WE'VE A LOT OF CATCHING UP TO DO
I DON'T BELIEVE IT! I TURNED ON THE CHARM AND HE TURNED ON HIS HEEL!
WELP, I RECKON IT'S TIME WE STARTED MOVIN' OUT!
GOTCHA, MR. QUENTIN. RED AND I'LL FINISH LOADING THE BIKES AND BE RIGHT WITH YOU.
YOU MIGHT AS WELL RIDE WITH ME, CYNTHIA. NOTHIN' MUCH MORE TO SEE HERE!
BUT AS RALPH QUENTIN STEERS HIS STATION WAGON ACROSS THE COUNTRY, CYNTHIA'S MIND IS ON ANYTHING BUT THE TRIP AHEAD.
FIRST I OVERESTIMATED MY IMPACT ON POOR JEREMY AND THEN I MADE THE MISTAKE OF THINKING ELIOT COULD BE SWEET TALKED INTO AN INTERVIEW. THIS JUST ISN'T MY DAY!

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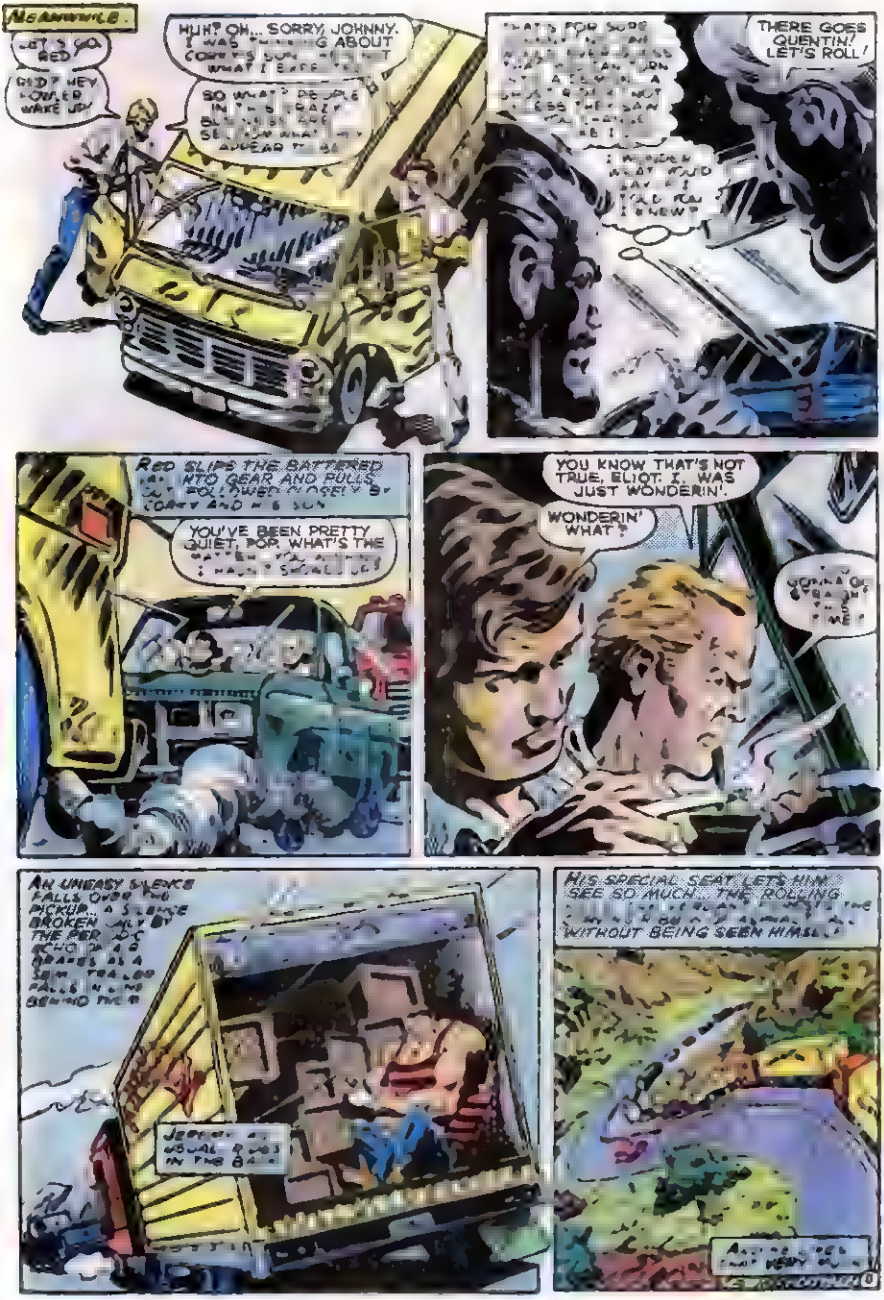
MEANWHILE...
HUH? OH... SORRY, JOHNNY. I WAS
SO WHAT'S PEOPLE
THERE GOES QUENTIN! LET'S ROLL!
RED SLIPS THE BATTERED
YOU'VE BEEN PRETTY QUIET, POP. WHAT'S THE
YOU KNOW THAT'S NOT TRUE, ELIOT. I WAS JUST WONDERIN'.
WONDERIN' WHAT?
AN UNEASY SILENCE
HIS SPECIAL SEAT LETS HIM

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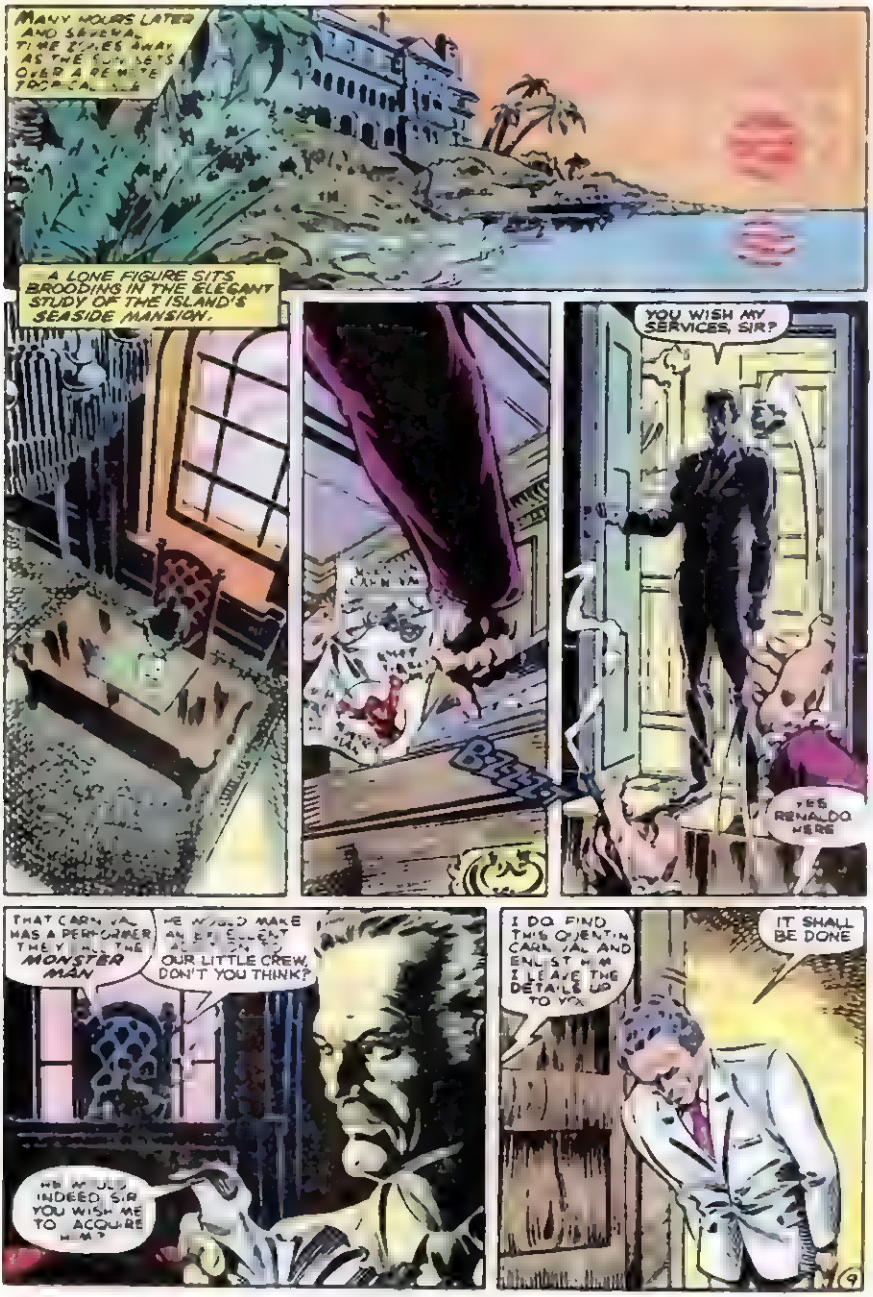
MANY HOURS LATER AND SEVERAL TIME ZONES AWAY AS THE SUN SETS OVER A REMOTE TROPICAL ISLE
A LONE FIGURE SITS BROODING IN THE ELEGANT STUDY OF THE ISLAND'S SEASIDE MANSION.
BLAZE
YOU WISH MY SERVICES, SIR?
YES, RENALDO HERE
THAT CARNIVAL HAS A PERFORMER THEY CALL THE MONSTER MAN
HE WOULD MAKE AN EXCELLENT ADDITION TO OUR LITTLE CREW, DON'T YOU THINK?
HE WOULD INDEED, SIR. YOU WISH ME TO ACQUIRE HIM?
I DO FIND THIS QUENTIN CARNIVAL AND ENLIST HIM. I LEAVE THE DETAILS UP TO YOU.
IT SHALL BE DONE
9

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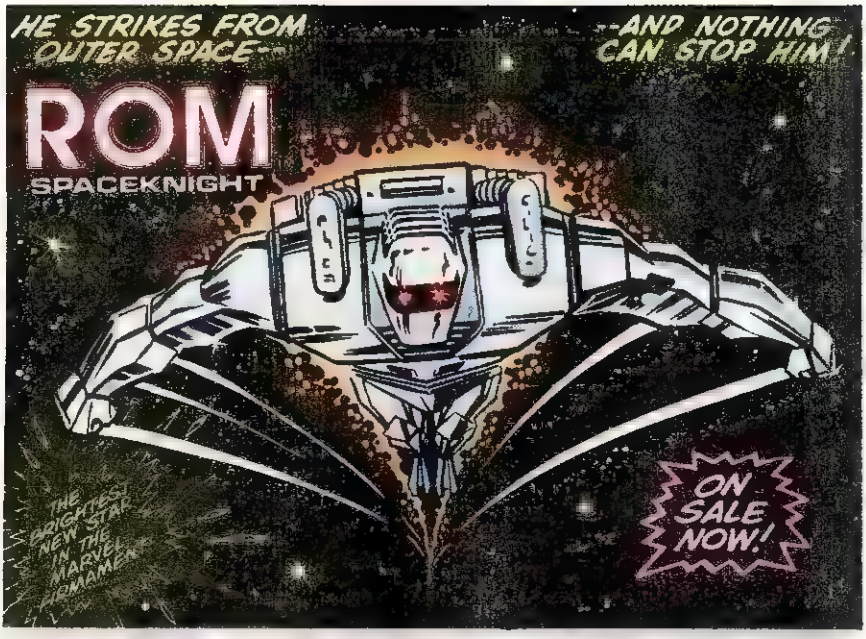

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Set your Jumping Disc down. Wave your hand over it and say the magic words. Wow! It jumps high in the air. You catch it and show that it has changed colors. What a trick! (Directions on how to do it are included.)

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If you hurry, Willy Wonka will send you TWO Magic Discs — one red, one blue. Here's all you have to do!

To receive Willy Wonka's Magic Jumping Disc, send this coupon plus two empty packages from Willy Wonka candies and 50¢ to:

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P.O. Box 123, Bethalto, IL 62010.
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THREE DAYS LATER..
THE CARNIVAL STANDS REASSEMBLED ON A NEW MIDWESTERN SITE.
GOOD CROWD. GOOD SHOW, TOO!
I FEEL LIKE A MILLION! IT'S BEEN DAYS SINCE I WEAKENED AND LET THE GHOST RIDER TAKE OVER MY BODY.
TARGET
AND IF I CAN KEEP HIM LOCKED INSIDE ME THAT LONG--
--MAYBE I CAN KEEP HIM LOCKED UP FOREVER!
BUT, MR. QUENTIN--!
WE HAVE NO FURTHER BUSINESS!
WHAT'S THIS?
I BELIEVE YOU ARE MISTAKEN, SIR!
I OFFERED YOU A MOST GENEROUS SUM OF MONEY FOR YOUR EMPLOYEE'S CONTRACT, AND I AM NOT ACCUSTOMED TO BEING REFUSED!
WHAT?! GET YER HANDS OFF A ME, RENALDO!
NOT UNTIL I RECEIVE A MORE SATISFACTORY ANSWER, SIR!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON HERE BUT SEEING A STRANGER MANHANDLING MY BOSS DOESN'T SET RIGHT WITH ME!
OUR BUSINESS IS OF NO CONCERN TO UNDERLINGS!
THAT'S ANOTHER THING THAT RILES ME
..I DON'T LIKE BEING CALLED AN UNDERLING!
I'M POWERFUL GLAD YOU CAME ALONG, JOHNNY MR. RENALDO HERE WANTED TO BUY JEREMY LIKE HE WAS A SIDE O' BEEF!
REALLY? IN THAT CASE--
--I'D SAY YOUR BUSINESS HERE WAS OVER, RENALDO!
AND DON'T COME BACK! THERE'RE FOLKS HERE WHO WON'T BE AS FRIENDLY AS ME!
WELCOME TO
YOU SHALL LIVE TO REGRET THIS, MR. BLAZE.
BUT YOU SHALL NOT LIVE SO VERY LONG!
10

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EVENING AT A CARNIVAL IS A TIME OF LIGHTS AND FUN AND SAFETY OF GAMES AND RIDES AND COTTON CANDY
BUT EVENING MUST EVENTUALLY GIVE WAY TO NIGHT THE CARNIVAL CLOSES
THE CONCESSIONS CLOSE DOWN
AND THE LIGHTS WINK OFF ALONG THE MIDWAY
ALL IS PEACEFUL ALL IS QUIET
BUT, ON A WOODED KNOLL SOUTH OF THE CARNIVAL GROUNDS A MAN IN A RENTED VAN PLANS TO END THAT PEACE
WE HAVE ARRIVED, MY FRIENDS
GO... CARRY OUT YOUR ORDERS!
LET NOTHING STAND IN YOUR WAY!

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AT THAT MOMENT JUST A FEW MINUTES AWAY, ON THE GRAND JOURNEY
HEY JOHNNY
-YOU UP FOR A LITTLE POKER? CORKY'S GETTING A GAME TOGETHER IN HIS TENT.
SOUNDS GOOD TO ME, PED. I'LL BE ALONG IN A FEW MINUTES. TRY NOT TO LOSE YOUR SHIRT TILL I GET THERE.
HAH! YOU JUST BRING PLENTY OF CASH, OLD SON.
UH-HUH. IF YOU WERE AS SKILLED WITH CARDS AS YOU WERE WITH BIKES, YOU'D BE RICH.
PED'S ALWAYS BEEN A LITTLE TOO EAGER TO PLACE A BET. I WOULDN'T BE SURPRISED IF IT WAS GAMBLING THAT GOT HIM MIXED UP WITH THAT LOAN SHARK.
THE GHOST RIDER SAVED PED'S NECK FROM THAT CREEP, BUT NEARLY DROWNED HIM IN THE PROCESS!
"ISSUE # 65
IF ONLY I COULD CONTROL THE GHOST RIDER... BUT I CAN'T. THE BEST I CAN DO IS KEEP HIM LOCKED AWAY... LIKE I'VE KEPT THESE LOCKED UP FOR THE PAST FEW DAYS.
MY OLD RACING LEATHERS... I WAS WEARING THEM WHEN I WAS LOST TURNED INTO THE GHOST RIDER. IT'S JUST MY IMAGINATION, BUT THEY STILL SEEM TO REEK OF BRIMSTONE!
I CAN'T LOOK AT THIS SUIT ANYMORE WITHOUT THINKING OF HIM.
IT'S HIGH TIME I GOT RID OF THIS SUIT ENTIRELY. I'LL GO BURY IT SOMEWHERE IN THE WOODS.
I'M SURE THAT NOT SEEING THESE LEATHERS WAS WELL ON ITS WAY TO BECOME MY WEAKEST TEMPTATION OF LETTING THE GHOST RIDER FREE.
IT MAY NOT RID ME OF THE GHOST RIDER'S CURSE, BUT IT JUST MAY MAKE THINGS EASIER
WHAT'S THE OLD SAYING? "OUT OF SIGHT... OUT OF MIND?" YEAH!
12

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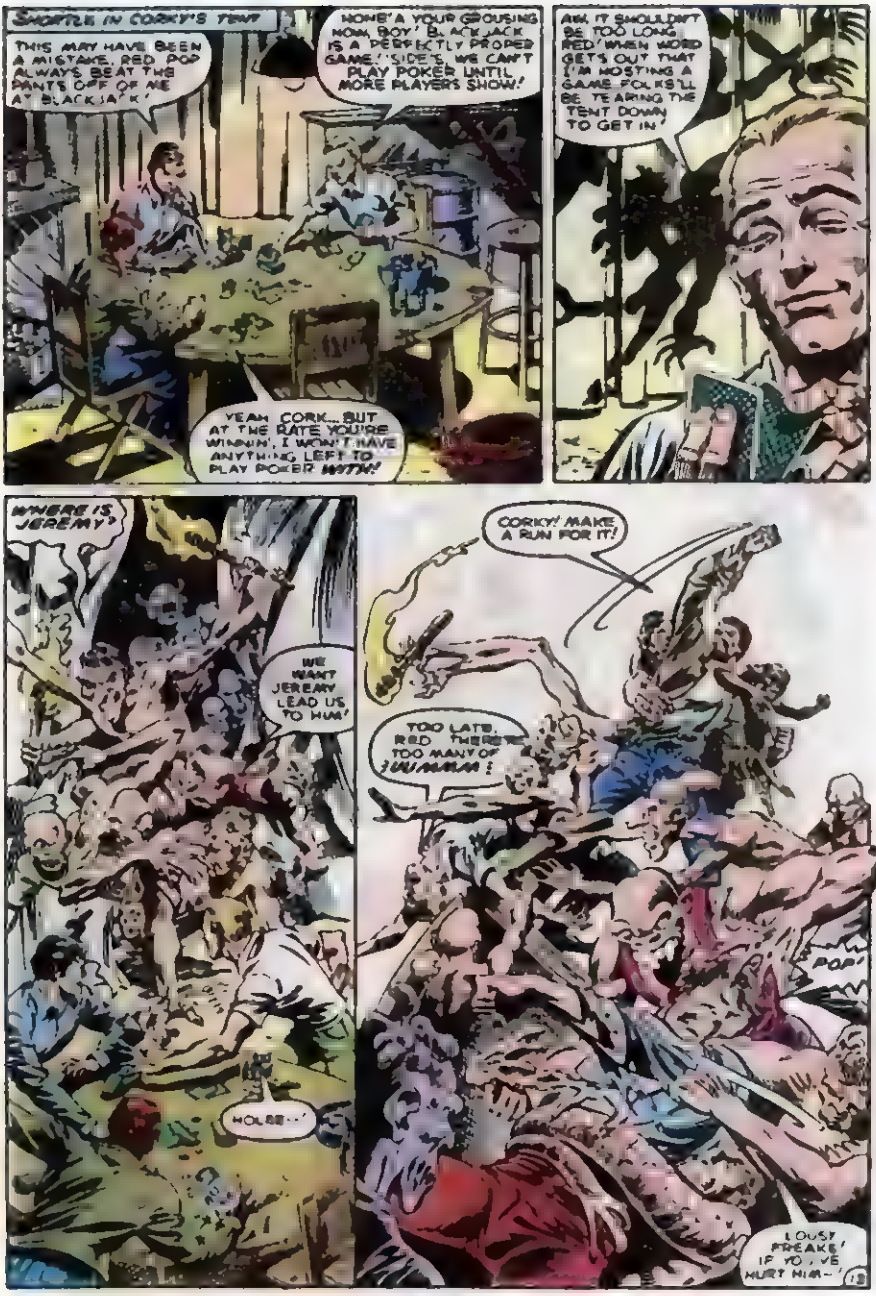
SHORTLY IN CORKY'S TENT
THIS MAY HAVE BEEN A MISTAKE, RED. POP ALWAYS BEAT THE PANTS OFF OF ME AT BLACKJACK'
HOME'A YOUR GROUSING NOW, BOY! BLACKJACK IS A PERFECTLY PROPER GAME! 'SIDE'S, WE CAN'T PLAY POKER UNTIL MORE PLAYERS SHOW!
YEAH, CORK... BUT AT THE RATE YOU'RE WINNIN', I WON'T HAVE ANYTHING LEFT TO PLAY POKER WITH!
AW, IT SHOULDN'T BE TOO LONG, RED! WHEN WORD GET'S OUT THAT I'M HOSTING A GAME, FOLKS'LL BE TEARING THE TENT DOWN TO GET IN!
WHERE IS JEREMY?
WE WANT JEREMY LEAD US TO HIM!
HOLD!--!
CORKY! MAKE A RUN FOR IT!
TOO LATE, RED! THERE'RE TOO MANY OF 'EM!
POP!
LOUSY FREAKS! IF YOU'VE HURT HIM--
13

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ELIOT FRANKLIN'S THREAT IS ABRUPTLY CUT OFF AS THE BIZARRE STRIKE FORCE OVERWHELMS THE TRIO AND SWEEPS OUT OVER THE CARNIVAL GROUNDS.
THE DAMAGE THEY CAUSE IS MOSTLY SUPERFICIAL DESTRUCTION IS NOT THEIR GOAL
THEY SEEK PRISONERS!
WHAT THE—?!
IT IS THE ONE CALLED JOHNNY BLAZE! SEIZE HIM!
WHERE IN THE DEVIL DID THESE CREATURES COME FROM?
DON'T LET HIM GET AWAY!
THAT LITTLE ONE! PULLING MY BAG IS THROWING ME OFF BALANCE
MY BAG.
THE GHOST RIDER WOULD MAKE FAST WORK OF THESE WEIRDIES. I OUGHT TO LET HIM...NO!
I DON'T CARE! THAT DAMNABLE DEMON MIGHT JUST HELP THEM!
TOO MANY PEOPLE COULD BE HURT! I HAVE TO RESIST THE TEMPTATION I MUSTN'T CHANGE!
THE SPIRIT OF JOHNNY BLAZE IS STRONG THIS NIGHT THROUGH SHEER FORCE OF WILL HE KEEPS HIS DEMONIC SOULMATE LOCKED INSIDE.
AND THAT, ALAS, IS HIS UNDOING

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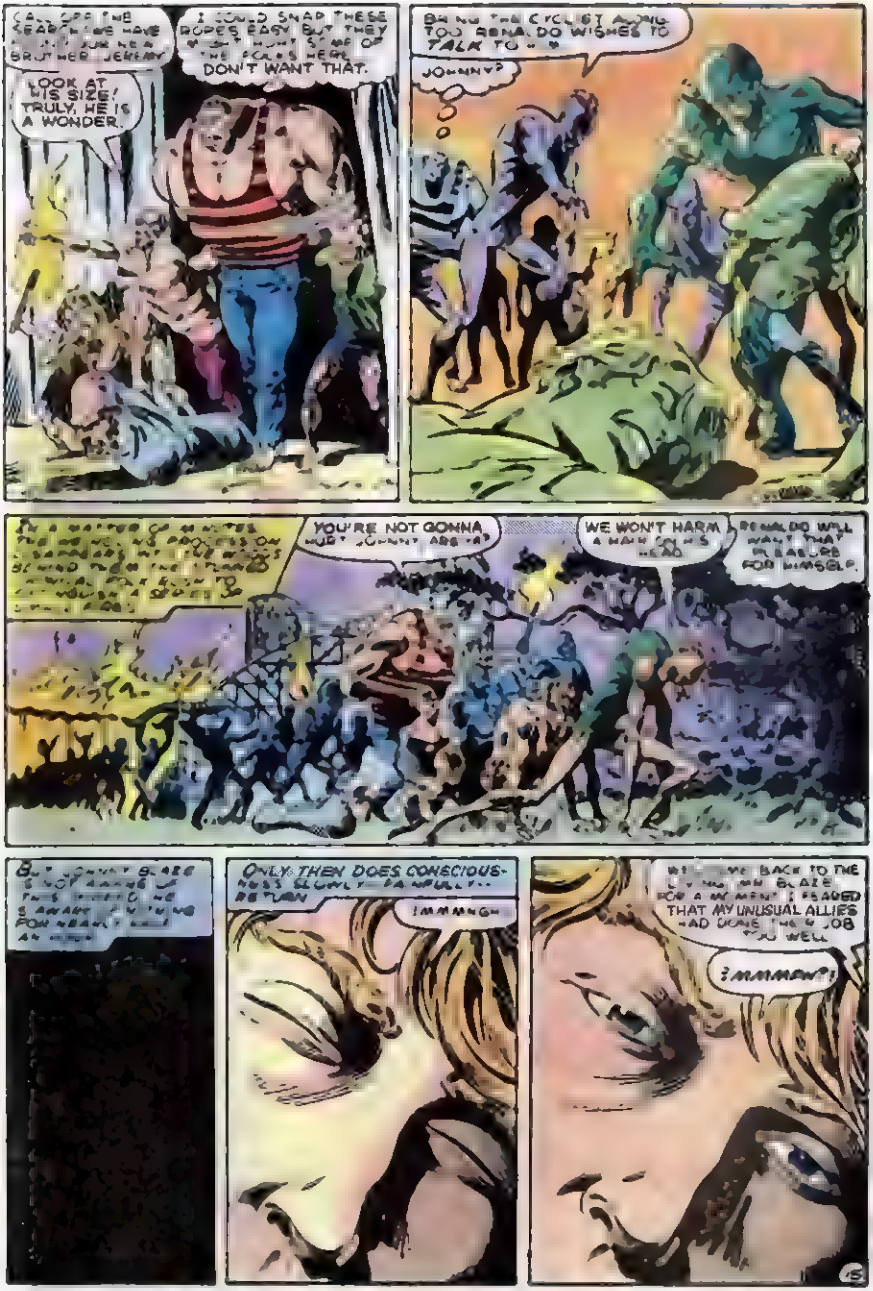
I COULD SNAP THESE ROPES EASY, BUT THEY'D HURT SOME OF THE PEOPLE HERE. DON'T WANT THAT.
LOOK AT THE SIZE OF HIM! TRULY, HE IS A WONDER.
AND THE CYCLIST ALONG TOO! RONALDO WISHES TO TALK TO HIM
JOHNNY?
YOU'RE NOT GONNA HURT JOHNNY ARE YA?
WE WON'T HARM A HAIR ON HIS HEAD
RONALDO WILL WANT THAT PLEASURE FOR HIMSELF.
ONLY THEN DOES CONSCIOUSNESS SLOWLY RETURN
!MMMMGH
BACK TO THE REAL WORLD, BLAZE FOR A MOMENT I FEARED THAT MY UNUSUAL ALLIES HAD DONE THE JOB TOO WELL
?MMMM
15

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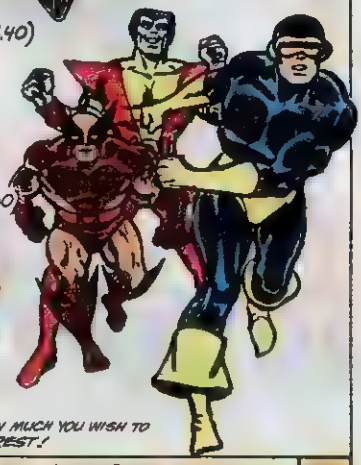

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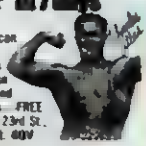

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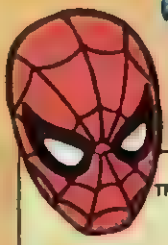

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GHOST WRITERS!

c/o MARVEL COMICS GROUP
575 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10022

TOM DeFALCO
EDITOR
MARK GRUENWALD
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Dear Editor

GHOST RIDER #66 was the best issue I've read in months. Of course, the past few issues have all led up to this, but there was always a little something lacking in them that ruined the story for me.

GHOST RIDER has been going through some changes lately, and in my opinion they're for the better. You finally seem to have found a direction for the book. Now there's a decent cast of supporting characters and something akin to a home base for Johnny. Of course, Johnny can't keep hanging around and changing to Ghost Rider for long. Otherwise, somebody is bound to make the connection, or see him change like Red did.

There were a lot of little touches which made this issue enjoyable. I like seeing G.R. in something other than his leathers, for instance. The only thing I could see to throw brickbats at was that blamed candle! When Madam Olga bought it, the candle didn't look the least bit melted. But in the flashback to the 15th century, the thing was leaking out of the bowl! Of course, there's a simple explanation for this. When the Wind-Witch transferred her soul to the candle, she was able to alter its appearance. Te-dah! Answers while you wait!

It's been nice to see GHOST RIDER steadily over the past few months. The only thing you lack now is a good regular artist. See if you can keep Bob Budiansky on the case. He has done some excellent covers.

Terry Collins
Mt. Airy Comics club
337 Badgett Avenue
Mt. Airy, NC 27030

Terry, we're sure you'll agree that Bob has drawn some pretty spectacular interiors, as well! And say, how about that illustrative inker Dave Simons? We think we've finally latched onto the ideal art team for GHOST RIDER! What do *you* say?

Dear Mr. DeFalco

I've been reading comics just about all my life, but after reading GHOST RIDER #66, I decided it was time to finally sit down and write.

I really like the way you're developing Ghost Rider. I have to agree with the letter from Jason Foras and Michael Kelly... you should definitely have Ghost Rider meet the Wolverine! Those two are my favorite Marvel characters. I also think you should pit the Brimstone Biker against the Hulk again!

Bill Newton
(No address given)

Wolverine, eh? Hmmm...

Dear Tom,

How about an issue featuring a confrontation between Ghost Rider and Agatha Harkness (from the FANTASTIC FOUR)?

Glenn J. St. Etienne
2427 Annette
New Orleans, LA 70119

Well, right now, Johnny Blaze is closer to Wolverine's neck of the woods. But if he should ever wind up in the vicinity of New Salem... who knows?

Dear Tom,

Ghost Rider's battle with the Wind-Witch was very good. Let's see more guest-stars like Brother Voodoo, the Silver Surfer, Rom, Spider-Woman, Golem, and the Scarecrow. Would Ghost Rider's hellfire have any effect on someone like Machine Man or Vision? And how about a GHOST RIDER ANNUAL?

Peter Garcia
Box 711
Hatillo, PR 00659

That question about the effects of hellfire on Machine Man or the Vision is intriguing, Pete. We'll have to have the old Brimstone Biker check that out for himself one of these days!

Dear Tom,

I just finished GHOST RIDER #67, and there are several things I think I like about it.

First, the cover. I liked both the figure of G.R. and the background... a page from the book, no less! The interior art is still not on a par with that of Michael Golden or Craig Russell (I have high standards), but it is definitely improving.

For once, I was caught up in the story. Here were human beings with real problems... a pathetic old woman and a tormented young man. This is one of your better stories... the best in a very long time, in fact. It's nice to see that Johnny Blaze is still a very warm, concerned human being despite everything that's happened to him.

You know, it's rare that one gets to see vengeance in this manner. And Sally certainly showed her mother what the lust for vengeance could do. But Sally's spirit was far from saintly... she *used* both the Ghost Rider and Johnny Blaze. No angel she!

As for the relative-stength-of-the-Ghost-Rider question... well, he certainly can't punch out the Hulk or the Thing or Thor, but then who can? Besides, G.R. is much trickier... and meaner! If he ever really went one on one with Spider-Man, ol' Spidey wouldn't have a chance.

As for the super-villains versus ordinary crumbs mini-controversy, I like to see Ghost Rider battle mystic forces and large numbers of normal nasties. But I really like it when the demon gets to cut loose on the not-so-pleasant types.

I like Red Fowler and his little mystery, but where was the carnival this issue? How did Johnny get from the carnival to Pennsylvania? What happened?

Finally, I must say that you always edit my letters so nicely. They look so much better than the rough drafts I come up with. I get the feeling that you actually listen to my suggestions.

(Oh, and it's so nice to see I'm not the only one who remembers Beppe Sabatini from the letters pages. Seems to me, he's deserted *Ghost Writers* for the *Fantastic Four Fan Page*.)

Ellen B. Layendecker
856 LaMesa Drive
Portola Valley, CA 94025

Of course, we listen to your suggestion, Ellen! We listen to *all* our readers' suggestions! (so keep those cards and letters comin' in, folks!)

As for the locale for issue #67's "Holding on to Sally"... well, Johnny does have some occasional free time from the carnival, and the carnival *is* in the Midwest. (And yes, we know that Pennsylvania isn't in the Midwest, but Ohio is... and Ohio is adjacent to Pennsylvania, so you can draw your own conclusions.)

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RENALDO! SO, HE'S BEHIND THIS ARMY OF FREAKS! WHY? WHAT'S HIS GAME?
YOUR EYES REVEAL YOUR CONFUSION, MY FRIEND. NO DOUBT YOU HAVE MANY QUESTIONS
IT'S A PITY I SHAN'T HAVE TIME TO ANSWER THEM, MY FRIENDS AND I MUST BE LEAVING SOON. WE'LL BE TAKING JEREMY WITH US
BUT BEFORE WE GO
...I WISH TO REPAY YOU FOR YOUR TREATMENT OF ME THIS MORNING!
LET US SEE HOW STRONG YOUR RIBCAGE IS!
KRAK
THAT... PIECE OF SLIME MEANS TO CRIPPLE ME... BIT BY BIT!
CREEPS LIKE HIM ALMOST MAKE ME GLAD I HAVE THIS CURSE!
THIS TIME, JOHNNY BLAZE DOES NOT RESIST THE CALL OF THE DEMON
...HE WELCOMES IT!
HAH-HAH-HA!!

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DO I NOW SEE CONFUSION IN YOUR EYES, REHALDO--
--OR DO I SEE FEAR?
FEAR, IT SHOULD BE! YOU HAVE BEEN
AND THE
BEFORE MY EYES! YET HE MOVES
THIS IS NO CARNIVAL TRICK! THIS IS SOMETHING...UNNAT
AT ALL COSTS
YOU FOLLOW THAT KNAVE'S ORDERS?
BAH! YOU ARE
THAN BLAZE!
THAT IDIOT EVER DID RIGHT WAS MAKE HIS PACT WITH THE REALM INFERNAL...
BLAZE'S BAG
IT IS UNSEEMLY FOR THE SPIRIT OF
TO BE
AND SO, MINUTES LATER
A GOOD CHASE MAKES VICTORY ALL THE SWEETER! HAH-HA-HA!
WITH A
CREATES A CYCLE OF MYSTIC FLAME--
17

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AND ALOOT'S FOURTH CHECK THE PUNK WITH BOOTH
WHAT THE--?
YEEOW!
ONE SICK MORTAL'S GETTIN' MY WAY!
FIRST THE SE FREAKS AND NOW THIS! THIS IS THE LAST TIME I'LL STAY HERE!
THE FINEST LOOKIN' BUCK I'VE EVER LAID!
THOSE WHO GET IN MY WAY SHALL BE SLAIN!
YOU
M M MP
RENALDO'S PARTY LEFT IN A HURRY WHERE DID THEY GO?
I I
SPEAK OR I'LL RIP THE TONGUE FROM YOUR SLAVERING MOUTH!
HE DIDN'T SAY BUT HE HAVE TO BE KNOWN AS A PRIVATE PLANE! HE'S PROBABLY HEADED FOR THE COUNTY AIRPORT.
B-BUT IT'S CLOSED THIS TIME OF NIGHT
PLEASE DON'T HURT ME
IN A FLASH, THE BRIMSTONE BIKER ROCKETS OUT OF THE HOTEL LOBBY SCORCHING THE GRASSES OF THE WELL-KEPT LAWN AS HE SHIFTS INTO GEAR! NO MAN-MADE CYCLE EVER POSSESSED!
THE AIRPORT LIES TWENTY MILES AHEAD. I MUST HAVE MORE SPEED! MORE!
8

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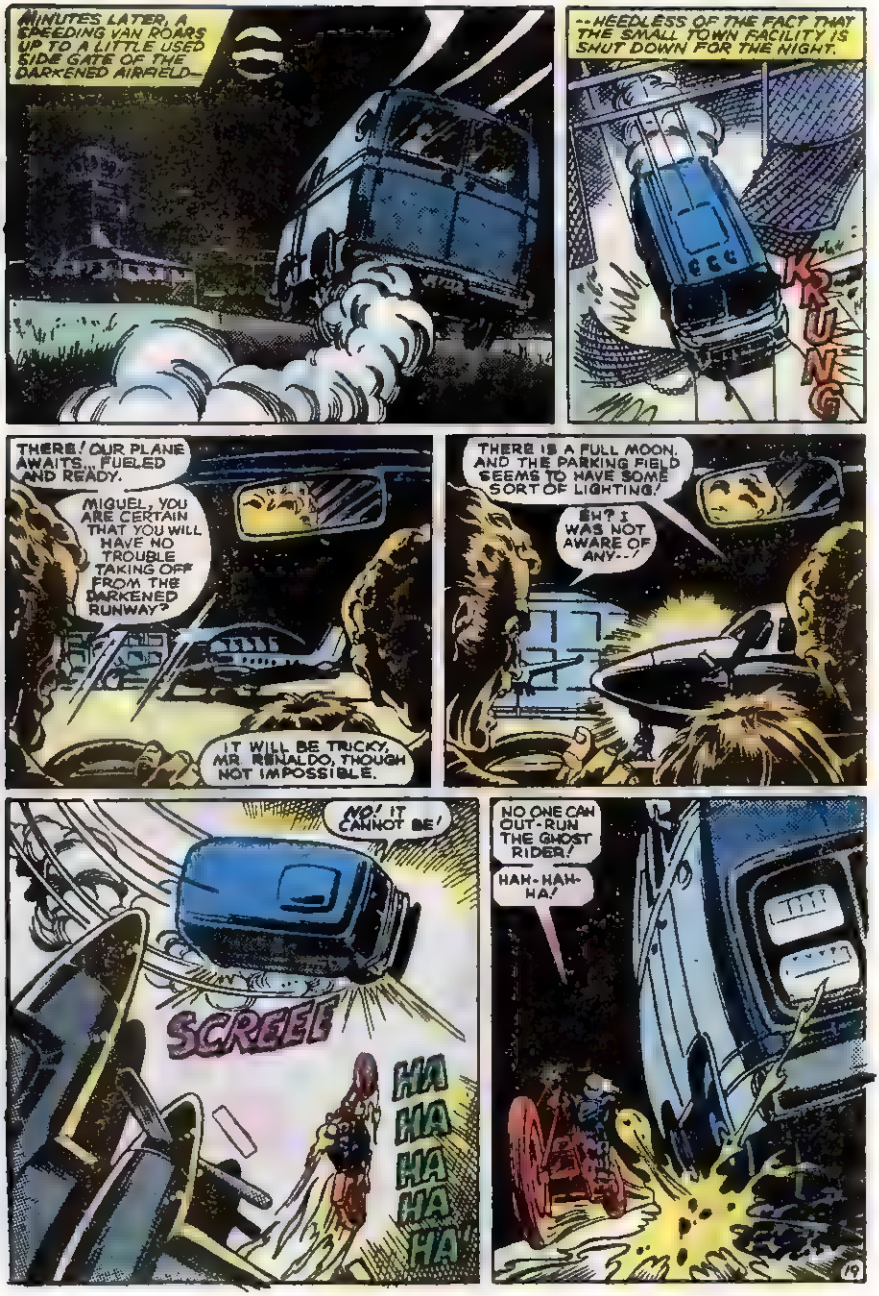
MINUTES LATER, A SPEEDING VAN ROARS UP TO A LITTLE USED SIDE GATE OF THE DARKENED AIRFIELD--
--HEEDLESS OF THE FACT THAT THE SMALL TOWN FACILITY IS SHUT DOWN FOR THE NIGHT.
KRUNG
THERE! OUR PLANE AWAITS... FUELED AND READY.
MIGUEL, YOU ARE CERTAIN THAT YOU WILL HAVE NO TROUBLE TAKING OFF FROM THE DARKENED RUNWAY?
IT WILL BE TRICKY, MR. RINALDO, THOUGH NOT IMPOSSIBLE.
THERE IS A FULL MOON, AND THE PARKING FIELD SEEMS TO HAVE SOME SORT OF LIGHTING.
EH? I WAS NOT AWARE OF ANY--!
NO! IT CANNOT BE!
SCREEE
HA HA HA HA HA
NO ONE CAN OUT-RUN THE GHOST RIDER!
HAH-HAH-HA!
19

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H-HE MELTED THE ASPHALT RIGHT OUT FROM UNDER THE VAN! I MUST GET OUT OF HERE!
THE FREAKS SHOULD DELAY HIM LONG ENOUGH FOR ME TO FIND REFUGE AMONG THE HANGARS!
EH? W-WHY S'IT SO HOT?
SURPRISED, RENALDO? LIKE YOURSELF, I DO NOT DEAL WITH MERE UNDERLINGS! HAH HA-HA
NO! NO, LET ME GO!
IN GOOD TIME.
..BUT FIRST, WE MUST TEACH THESE FREAKS A FEW THINGS, YOU AND I!
HEAR ME, TWISTED ONES AND HEAR ME WELL!
MOST OF YOU ARE GUILTY OF NOTHING MORE THAN BLINDLY OBEYING THE COMMANDS OF THIS SINNER. THUS, YOU ARE NOT DESERVING OF MY VENGEANCE.
BUT YOU STILL MUST LEARN ITS LESSON!
STEPPING FROM HIS MYSTIC CYCLE, THE DEMON ALLOWS IT TO BURN AWAY INTO NOTHINGNESS. AND THEN...

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BULLPEN BULLETINS

IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN . . .

Hello. I'm back again. Ordinarily, in this space, I regale you with alleged wit, provide you with behind-the-scenes personal glimpses of the Marvel Bullpen, announce the news, and pontificate from my perch as Editor-in-Chief. But this time, I'm going to devote the entire column to answering the question I've been asked a couple of thousand times recently: *"Since I don't have a Comics Specialty Shop near my home, how can I buy MOON KNIGHT, THE MICRONAUTS, KA-ZAR and Marvel's other Direct Exclusives?"*

Well, I checked with Ed Shultan, our Vice President of Circulation, who referred me to Mike Friedrich, our Direct Sales Manager, who said that anyone having trouble getting Marvel's non-newsstand publications should get in touch with the Direct Distributor nearest him. The following is a list of those Distributors.

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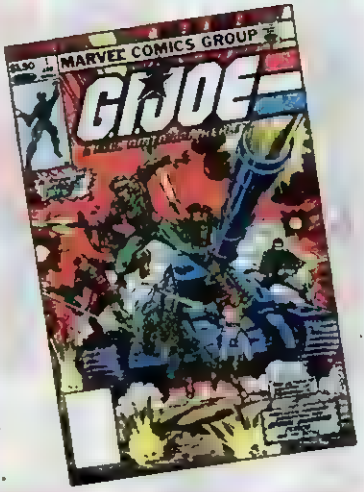
Got that? Okay. And if *they* can't help you, write to me here at 575 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10022. I'm always here.

HAPPY TRAILS TO YOU. . .

. . . because it's five forty-five here and I'm off to celebrate with Frank Miller and Denys Cowan their birthdays (January 27th and 30th, respectively). A bunch of us Bullpenners are having a dinner bash at D'Angelo and I don't want to be late for the linguini!

Till next month,

Jim Shooter



THE HYPE BOX

INCREDIBLE HULK #273 — With all the new special projects and hoo-hah events happening around here, we sometimes forget about what a great job BILL MANTLO and SAL BUSCEMA do every month on this mainstay Marvel mag. We shouldn't — and we hope you don't either. It's still a fine example of consistently exciting super hero storytelling.

CONAN #136 — Big JOHN BUSCEMA is back — and how!

MASTER OF KUNG FU #114 — For this one, writer DOUG MOENCH sequestered himself in the library, researching ancient Chinese legends, and he's come up with a chillingly authentic story. See for yourself!

THE MIGHTY MARVEL CHECKLIST

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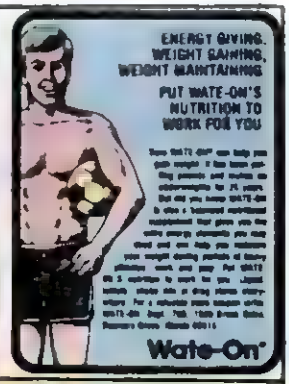

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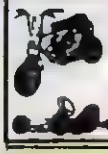

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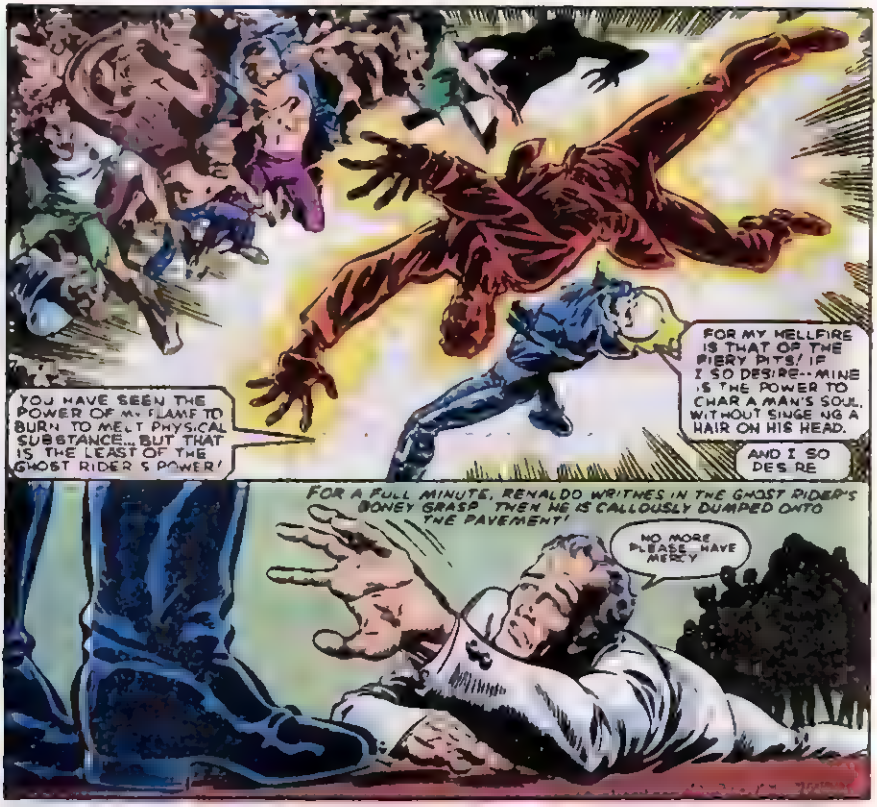
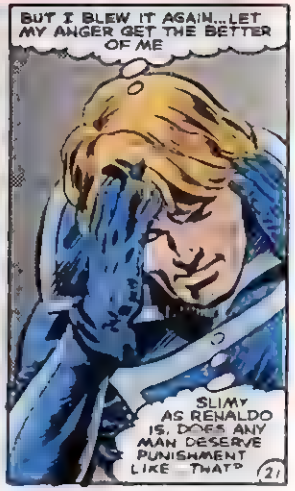

YOU HAVE SEEN THE POWER OF MY FLAME TO BURN TO MELT PHYSICAL SUBSTANCE... BUT THAT IS THE LEAST OF THE GHOST RIDER'S POWER!
FOR MY HELLFIRE IS THAT OF THE FIERY PITS! IF I SO DESIRE--MINE IS THE POWER TO CHAR A MAN'S SOUL, WITHOUT SINGEING A HAIR ON HIS HEAD.
AND I SO DESIRE

FOR A FULL MINUTE, RENALDO WRITHES IN THE GHOST RIDER'S BONEY GRASP. THEN HE IS CALLOUSLY DUMPED ONTO THE PAVEMENT!
NO MORE PLEASE... HAVE MERCY

--WHEN VENGEANCE IS--
--DONE
EH?
THANK GOD, IT'S OVER AND DONE! AT LEAST, THE DEMON IS CONTENT TO GIVE ME MY BODY BACK, ONCE HE'S HAD HIS FILL OF VENGEANCE!



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UH-OH... THIS WASN'T THE BEST PLACE FOR GHOST RIDER TO LEAVE ME. IT'S A GOOD THING HE SPOOKED THOSE FREAKS THE WAY HE DID--
--OTHERWISE, THEY MIGHT BE TEMPTED TO TEAR ME APART!
JOHNNY?
YEAH, JEREMY... IT'S ME! LOOK, I'LL TRY TO EXPLAIN LATER. RIGHT NOW, WE'D BETTER HIGHTAIL IT BACK TO THE CARNIVAL.
NO, JOHNNY... I'M NOT GOIN' BACK. I'M LEAVIN' WITH MY... MY BROTHERS.
YOU'RE WHAT?!
BUT... WHY, JEREMY? IS IT BECAUSE OF ME? BECAUSE OF WHAT I AM?
NO... BECAUSE OF WHAT I AM.
SURE, SEEIN' THAT THING THAT'S INSIDE'A YOU SCARED ME AN' THE OTHERS PLENTY--
--BUT I FIGGER YOU REALLY CAN'T HELP IT... NO MORE'N WE CAN HELP BEIN' WHAT WE ARE.
WE'RE DIFFERENT, JOHNNY. WE'RE... FREAKS.
I'VE JUS' BEEN WITH THESE FOLKS A LITTLE WHILE, BUT THEY SEEM LIKE GOOD PEOPLE.
RENALDO AN' HIS BOSS MAY BE BAD... BUT I BET I CAN HANDLE THEM!
AFTER ALL, WHERE WE'RE GOIN', WE'LL BE THE MAJORITY... AN' RENALDO WILL BE THE FREAK!
SAY G'BYE TO MR. QUENTIN FOR ME, JOHNNY.
WITHIN MINUTES, JEREMY AND HIS NEWFOUND BROTHERS HAVE THE UNCONSCIOUS RENALDO LOADED ABOARD THE LITTLE PLANE, AND THEN...
GOOD LUCK TO YOU, MY FRIEND. IT MUST BE MIGHTY NICE TO HAVE A PLACE TO GO WHERE YOU DON'T HAVE TO HIDE WHAT YOU ARE... A PLACE WHERE YOU CAN BE NORMAL.
YEAH... MUST BE NICE.
END

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THE WAY TO GO WITH CAPTAIN 'O'! Let me tell you how to earn super PRIZES or BIG CASH PROFITS...at NO COST TO YOU! You can do it — by joining the Olympic Sales Club and selling beautiful, All Occasion Cards and Notes, Personalized Stationery and exciting Gifts from their FREE colorfully illustrated 1982 Sales Folder.

- **FRIENDS, RELATIVES, NEIGHBORS**...*anyone's* a prospect! Just by showing the high-quality, low-priced Olympic line you'll earn prize credits or $1.00 cash profit *for yourself* on every item sold.
- **YOU PAY NOTHING...OWE NOTHING...RETURN NOTHING!** Call my Captain 'O' Operator* TOLL-FREE *OR* mail us your name, address and zip code. Either way, you'll get full membership information, Olympic's FREE full-color Catalog of 82 Prizes, and FREE Sales Folder...*everything* you need to join and earn PRIZES or CASH the Olympic way!

*Name & address only please.
Operator CANNOT answer questions.

OLYMPIC SALES CLUB, INC.
Dept. 82MC4, Enfield, Connecticut 06082

PHONE FREE

CALL CAPTAIN "O" OPERATOR TOLL FREE
1-800-528-6050*
(In Arizona: 1-800-352-0458)
24 HOURS A DAY...
7 DAYS A WEEK, including Sunday

*Service available in 48 United States and Puerto Rico. Alaska and Hawaii please reply by mail.

Ask for Dawn

She or another CAPTAIN "O" operator is waiting to rush your name, address and ZIP CODE to us.

*PLEASE...operators can take name and address only... CANNOT answer questions.

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